UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/518
6 October 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Agenda items 12, 20, 23, 24,
39, 52, 94, 95, 96, 97,
100, 101, 102, 161 and 163

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS NEW AGENDA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA IN THE 1990s

LAW OF THE SEA

LAUNCHING OF GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

MACROECONOMIC POLICY QUESTIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

RENEWAL OF THE DIALOGUE ON STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE CONVENING OF A UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Letter dated 2 October 1995 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77 adopted on the occasion of the nineteenth annual meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 29 September 1995 (see annex).

On behalf of the Group of 77, I would highly appreciate if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 12, 20, 23, 24, 39, 52, 94, 95, 96, 97, 100, 101, 102, 161 and 163.

(Signed) Felipe MABILANGAN
Permanent Representative of the
Philippines to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77
New York

ANNEX

Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77
adopted on 29 September 1995

1. The Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 was held in New York on 29 September 1995.

2. The Ministers expressed the view that the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations provided a historic opportunity for all Member States of the United Nations to work towards fulfilling the purposes and principles of the Charter with renewed vigor and effectiveness in order to ensure a better life for all peoples, the eradication of poverty as well as reducing inequalities and gaps in living standards among nations and promoting development. They were convinced this remained the critical challenge for mankind as it entered the 21st century. Towards this end, the Ministers emphasized that in a world characterized by deepening interdependence and the globalization and the liberalization of the world economy, which presents both opportunities and challenges in terms of positive growth impulses and negative shocks, peace and security cannot be ensured in the absence of sustained economic growth and development, particularly in developing countries.

3. In reviewing developments in the world economic situation, the Ministers noted that there exist some positive trends in the world economy but continued to express concern at the slow and unbalanced growth of the global economy. They also expressed concern at the continuing adverse external economic environment for development characterized by increased protectionist tendencies in and unilateral actions by the developed countries, the worsening terms of trade of developing countries, stagnation and decline in ODA flows, restrictions on access to technologies critical to development, the inadequate allocation of resources of international financial institutions and volatile financial flows to developing countries linked, among others, to instability in global capital markets and fluctuations in exchange rates. Moreover, they noted with concern that the income gap between the developed and developing countries continued to widen. They stressed the need for these trends to be reversed decisively.

4. The Ministers stressed that international cooperation for development should be aimed at creating an international economic environment which supports and facilitates the national efforts of developing countries aimed at renewing sustained economic growth and development. Essential to this was the need for continuous macroeconomic policy coordination at the international level to foster the sustained growth of the world economy and for international economic decision-making processes to be transparent and involve fully the developing countries. At the same time, they stressed the critical need for developed countries and developing countries to engage in a comprehensive and constructive dialogue on all key development issues and to foster a genuine partnership for development. The early fulfillment of agreed international commitments and targets on development, which, in turn, required the provision of adequate resources, was deemed necessary. They reiterated that without adequate resources the development commitments agreed at the various international conferences and meetings on development would remain unfulfilled.

5. They also expressed concern at actions aimed at introducing new conditionalities for international economic cooperation, thereby undermining the sovereignty of nations. Development prospects were being constrained by attempts to introduce non-economic conditionalities on trade, ODA and technology transfer, even as resources for development were

declining and developing countries faced restrictions on market access of commodities, manufactures and services.

6. The Ministers also called upon the international community for the immediate elimination of coercive economic measures against developing countries which have not been authorized by the relevant organs of the UN or are inconsistent with the principles contained in the UN Charter as a means of forcibly imposing the will of one state on another.

7. The Ministers also stressed the urgent need to alleviate the impact of economic sanctions on the humanitarian needs of the targeted population, by examining and addressing such impact.

8. The Ministers affirmed their commitment to negotiate an action-oriented Agenda for Development which reflects the major concerns of developing countries in particular the need to implement existing international commitment for development, restoring both the issue of development to the heart of the UN agenda and the centrality of the UN in promoting international cooperation for development, and creating a balance between UN activities for development and its other activities, and providing for an increased commitment to the development of developing countries as well as for increasing international resources for development. In this regard, they noted the state of negotiations on the Agenda and urged all members of the Group to continue close coordination on all outstanding issues.

9. The Ministers called upon all States to assert the requisite political will to ensure an open, rule-based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system with the aim of achieving the complete integration of the developing countries into the world economy and the new international trading system. They reiterated the need for full implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreement and also called upon Member States, especially the developed countries, to implement fully the commitments agreed upon in the Final Act. In this regard, they also stressed that the Final Act confers special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and the net food importing countries. The Ministers further encouraged Member States who have not done so to submit, as appropriate, the WTO Agreement for the consideration of their respective authorities with a view to seeking approval of the Agreement in accordance with their national procedures.

10. They rejected unilateral actions of a protectionist nature, particularly those implemented after the Marakesh accords, which are inconsistent with multilateral trade agreements and emphasized the important role of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in contributing to a rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system. The Ministers also emphasized the need to use existing dispute settlement mechanisms of the WTO in order to resolve any trade controversies that may arise. They further stressed the need for positive measures to ensure that developing countries secure a greater share in international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development, and for measures to mitigate any negative and adverse effects on the developing countries from the implementation of the Agreement, including through compensation, enhanced market access provisions and financial

assistance towards structural economic transformation.

11. The Ministers noted with satisfaction that the Government of the Republic of Singapore would host the First Ministerial Review Conference of the World Trade Organisation in December 1996.

12. The Ministers recognized sub-regional and regional economic cooperation as an important means for expanding trade and investment opportunities as well as the transfer of technology. They stressed the need for a strong commitment by the international community to pursue regional economic cooperation within the framework of an open, equitable, non-discriminatory and rule-based multilateral trading system.

13. They further rejected the use of disguised protectionist measures in the form of new concepts seeking to link domestic standards relating to environment, labor laws, human rights, and other social issues, through the application of arbitrary trade measures and bilateral pressures against developing countries.

14. The Ministers urged the international community particularly the developed countries and international organizations to fulfill their commitments on the transfer of substantial new and additional financial resources and technology to the developing countries to meet their development challenges and implement existing development commitments.

15. The Ministers stressed that such resource mobilization for development must be reinforced by reductions in military expenditures in developed countries, including in the fields of production, stockpiling and developing all types of weapons, in particular nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, along the guidelines agreed upon in the context of global disarmament and the priorities set forth by the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and thus the channeling of resources released for supporting the developing countries in their efforts to promote social and economic development.

16. The Ministers while welcoming the increase in private foreign financial flows to many developing countries, stressed the importance that such flows, particularly foreign investment, be increasingly directed towards all developing countries and towards increasing productive capacity, as well as be aimed at enhancing economic growth and opportunities in developing countries. They also urged the international community to consider establishing transparent measures for monitoring short-term private flows so as to stimulate further investments in productive activities and to safeguard developing countries from the adverse effects of volatility in such flows. In this regard, they noted the increased vulnerability of developing countries to external shocks due to the increased integration of the world economy, and their economic liberalization efforts. Capital exporting countries must also enable, facilitate and promote foreign direct investment flows to developing countries, through incentives as well as through removal of barriers to import of goods and services from these countries. While paying due attention to the role of transnational corporations (TNCs) in the field of investment, they stressed that efforts

should be pursued to guarantee that capital flows emanating, inter alia, from TNCs should correspond to the national policies and priorities of the host country.

17. The Ministers regretted that despite the implementation of several approaches undertaken over the past decade by the international community, the debt crisis continues to persist as one of the main constraints for the development of developing countries, including for the least developed countries, and for those at the lower, lower-middle and middle-income levels. They reiterated the urgent need for the international community, particularly the donor countries and international financial institutions to adopt an effective, comprehensive and equitable, once-and-for-all development oriented and durable solution to the debt problem of the developing countries, including debt reduction and increased concessional financial flows for the least developed countries and Africa. At the same time, they stressed that structural adjustment policies must not divert resources away from social priorities in debtor countries.

18. The Ministers noted that many developing countries had adopted economic reforms under the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) of the Bretton Woods institutions. These reforms have been accompanied by adverse and significant social costs. They therefore called for a review of the programmes aimed at ameliorating the social and other costs of adjustment through appropriate poverty eradication measures and effective measures to address social priorities.

19. The Ministers noted that the efforts of developing countries to mobilize domestic resources for development needed to be supplemented by external resources commensurate with their development needs. In this regard, the Ministers expressed concern over the growing trend within the United Nations system regarding the diversion of the resources and the shifting of the priorities to other countries at the expense of developing countries.

20. The Ministers reiterated the urgent need for a substantial expansion of official development assistance (ODA) in view of the declining levels of such assistance over recent years. In this regard, they strongly urged compliance with internationally agreed targets of ODA and commitments for new and additional resources, particularly the fulfilment by the donor countries who had failed to do so of the 0.7 percent of their GNP by the year 2000 and commitments reflected in Agenda 21. They also expressed concern over attempts to reduce levels of ODA. They also stressed the need for qualitative improvements in ODA by the donor countries, inter alia, through reduced costs of repayment.

21. The Ministers reiterated the urgency of convening a United Nations Conference on the Financing of Development and welcomed the recommendation recently made in this regard by the Secretary-General, contained in his report on an Agenda for Development.

22. The Ministers stressed the importance to developing countries of access to science and technology in order to sustain their economic growth and development. Hence, the need for developing countries to participate in, benefit from and contribute to the rapid advances in

science and technology was underscored. The Ministers called upon the international community to help developing countries strengthen and develop their endogenous capacities and capabilities in science and technology, including in the area of environmentally sound technologies and new and emerging technologies. They also called for removing all barriers on access to technology and stressed that the transfer of technology should not be left solely in the hands of the private sector or based on market prices, and should enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the developing countries in the world market as well as improve the quality of life, health and the environment. In this context, they stressed the importance of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. They further called for the establishment of and/or strengthening national technology information centres in developing countries and their networking on regional and global levels to promote technology research, development and dissemination among developing countries.

23. The Ministers stressed the critical importance of effective follow up to landmark UN conferences held since 1990 to ensure that the commitments, recommendations and measures agreed to at those conferences are implemented as soon as possible. In this process, it is essential to ensure the thematic unity of the outcome of each conference while ensuring a coordinated approach on cross cutting issues. They endorsed the decision adopted in this regard in the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in June-July 1995 and further reiterated the need to ensure that each functional commission was treated on an equal footing. The size and composition of the commissions involved in the follow up to conferences such as the Population Commission and the Commission for Social Development should be brought on a par with others such as the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Commission on Human Rights. The Economic and Social Council should also develop its work programme and make recommendations regarding those of the functional commissions to ensure a coordinated follow up.

24. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to realizing the goals for children set out in the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the World Summit for Children and restated most recently at the World Summit for Social Development.

25. The Ministers stressed the need for prompt and full implementation of the commitments and recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which have more relevance today than ever before. In this regard, they stressed that such implementation should not contradict the right of developing countries to benefit fully from the utilization of their resources vital for sustained economic growth and development. They also urgently called on the international community, particularly the developed countries, to fulfill all their commitments contained in Agenda 21.

26. They expressed their profound regret that the developed countries have failed to fulfill the commitments they made at UNCED and renewed their call on developed countries to fulfill their commitments to provide adequate, predictable, new and additional financial and other resources towards this end. They also reaffirmed the important role that the Bretton Woods and

other international financial institutions should play in this regard. They also stressed that developed countries should take concrete measures for the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms.

27. They emphasized the importance of implementing the recommendation of the International Conference on Population and Development into action at all levels, and that such implementation would require new and additional resources.

28. The Ministers reiterated the importance of convening a Global Conference on Migration and Development bearing in mind the recommendations of the General Assembly, and reaffirmed the need for international cooperation and concerted responses to the plight and predicament of migrant workers and their families. Towards this end, they encouraged all countries to become party to the UN Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Their Families.

29. The Ministers stressed that in order for developing countries to implement the decisions under the Convention on Biological Diversity, priority should be given to the access and transfer of appropriate biotechnologies, and to a more constructive and cooperative approach by developed countries with developing country partners for the equitable sharing of benefits from the use of biological resources. In this context, they consider the need to examine ways and means for the effective protection, compensation and use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices of forest dwellers, indigenous people and other local communities, as well as fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from such knowledge, innovations and practices. The Ministers also supported the idea to enhance the scope of the debate with regard to this issue in different fields. The Ministers also welcomed the generous offer of the Government of Indonesia to host the COP-2 of the Convention on Biodiversity in November 1995 and urged member states to participate actively in the Conference.

30. The Ministers underscored their determination to adhere to the principles and fulfill the commitments contained in the Declaration of the World Summit for Social Development and emphasized the importance of implementing the Programme of Action aimed at eradication of poverty, enhancement of productive employment and reduction of unemployment, and to foster social integration.

31. The Ministers welcomed the convening of the First Conference of the Parties on the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the decisions agreed and noted that it was a first step in the process which must lead to concrete initiatives aimed at the full implementation of the Convention. They urged Annex 1 parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention, particularly the provision of new and additional resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on preferential and concessional basis.

32. The Ministers urged all Member States of the UN to accelerate the process of signature

and ratification of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, with a view to expediting the entry into force and full and effective implementation of the Convention and its regional annexes. There is a need for the international community to provide substantial financial resources and other forms of active support for the efforts of all affected developing country parties, particularly those in Africa, and the least developed countries, to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought.

33. The Ministers welcomed the entry into force of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea and invited countries that have not done so to accede to it. They looked forward to the successful outcome of the forthcoming Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention, including the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. The Ministers noted the recent successful conclusion of the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks as an essential contribution towards conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources, and in particular expressed satisfaction at the recognition in the Agreement adopted by the Conference of the special requirements of developing States in relation to the conservation, management and development of fisheries for those stocks.

34. The Ministers welcomed the holding of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and recognized the important role of women in economic and social development. The Ministers confirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Platform for Action, as adopted in Beijing, to achieve equality, development and peace for all, which will require adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources to the developing countries from all available funding mechanisms.

35. The Ministers fully supported the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and its preparatory process. They recognized the two themes of crucial importance for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action: "Sustainable Human Settlements in an Urbanized World" and "Adequate Shelter for All". Achieving adequate shelter for all is central to the socio-economic development and stability of human settlements and a basis for sustainable development. The Ministers expressed the hope that the deliberations and decisions of Habitat II would lead to greater attention to the problems of human settlements as well as increase international cooperation in this field. The Ministers reaffirmed the Global Strategy for Shelter to the year 2000 adopted by the General Assembly in 1988 to address the problem of lack of access to safe and adequate shelter and sanitation and called on Member States and the international community to provide much greater level of financial and other forms of support to implement the Global Strategy for Shelter to the year 2000 and the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

36. The Ministers stressed the need for enhanced international mechanisms for the provision of humanitarian and financial assistance to refugees and host countries and promote appropriate shared responsibility.

37. The Ministers reiterated their deep concern at the persistent critical socio-economic situation in Africa and the deteriorating economic conditions and regretted that four years after its adoption, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) remains largely unimplemented. The Ministers expressed disappointment at the failure of the international community, particularly the developed countries, to implement measures to support the development efforts of the countries in Africa as called for, among others, under UN-NADAF and reiterated during the High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council on the Development of Africa and the implementation of UN-NADAF. They called upon the international community to increase its assistance to these countries while stressing that the continent's economic and social development depends primarily on the efforts of the African countries themselves and hoped that the mid-term review of the implementation of UN-NADAF would reinvigorate the international commitment to the development of Africa.

38. The Ministers expressed their deep concern at the deteriorating socio-economic condition of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and called for priority action on the many international development commitments towards LDCs, especially those contained in the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for LDCs for the 1990s. In this regard, the Ministers expressed their hope that the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting of the Mid-term Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s will be able to recommend new and additional measures for the full and timely implementation of the Programme of Action.

39. The Ministers called on the international community to give special attention and support to the special development problems and needs of the land-locked developing countries, particularly through technical cooperation with and financial assistance by developed countries, and multilateral financial development institutions to enable these countries to effectively participate in a rapidly globalizing world economy. They also noted that as transit developing countries faced serious economic problems their efforts at developing a viable transit infrastructure also needed financial and technical support from the international community.

40. The Ministers called on the international community to give special priority to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and in particular underlined the urgency of new and additional resources to achieve this.

41. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the operational activities for development of the UN system in assisting socio-economic progress of all developing countries, and stressed that such activities should be carried out in accordance with the mandates established by the General Assembly, and within the framework of national priorities of the developing countries and in accordance with national priorities. They expressed disappointment at the continuing decrease in resources available for the UN operational activities for development, and reiterated their call on developed countries to increase their pledges for the financing of the UN operational activities for development on a continuous, predictable and assured basis.

42. They emphasized that improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of the operational activities for development required an urgent increase in the allocation of resources by donor countries on a continuous, predictable and assured basis. In that context, they also reaffirmed that those attempts to continue revising for funding mechanism, reforming the institutional structure and management at the field level or even unifying the administrative capacities of the Funds and Programs, not only undermine the capabilities of each Fund and Program, but also the decline in the availability of resources as the main concern for the fulfilment of agreed objectives and targets.

43. The Ministers emphasized the need for international institutions to attain a truly democratic and international character in terms of equal participation of all members in their decision-making processes in order to meet the challenges of sustaining economic growth and development in the context of the globalization of the world economy and deepening economic interdependence among nations. In this context, they recognized that the UN, being the most important universal institution must, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, play a central and active role in shaping international cooperation for economic growth and development, and examining the issue of development using an integrated approach. They stressed that the mandate of the UN in development and economic matters must be fully exercised and balance ensured in its consideration of development issues vis-a-vis peace-keeping and other issues. The Ministers strongly believed that this mandate could only be strengthened through the political will and cooperation of Member States, including the provision of additional resources aimed at strengthening the UN structures dealing with development to ensure the full implementation of their mandates.

44. The Ministers looked forward to the review to be undertaken at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly on the reforms and revitalization in the economic and social fields and stressed that such was less likely to be successful as long as some major contributors refrained from paying their assessed contributions unconditionally, in full and on time. The Ministers also stressed the need to correct the negative impact of these reforms and to improve the participation of developing countries both in the decision-making process within the governing bodies of the Funds and Programmes of the UN system as well as within the secretariats of the organizations of the U.N. system.

45. The Ministers thus recognized the need for the General Assembly being the highest intergovernmental mechanism for policy formulation and appraisal on matters relating to the economic, social and related fields, to exert more decisively its policy leadership on these issues as provided for in the United Nations Charter. In this regard, they stressed the comprehensive mandate of the United Nations on economic and social issues as stated in the Charter and rejected the notion of division of labour or comparative advantage of specific institutions in the field of development. Moreover, they stressed that ECOSOC's role, as reflected in the Charter and recent General Assembly resolutions, must be fully exercised.

46. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is the sole entity

in the United Nations system dealing with trade and development questions in a comprehensive manner. It is therefore an important focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues. The Ministers therefore attached particular importance to the strengthening of UNCTAD in order to enable this institution to exercise fully its development mandate, particularly with the creation of WTO, in the light of the globalization of the international economy and the deepening economic interdependence among states, and the implications of these phenomena on the prospects of economic growth and development of the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and the countries of Africa. The Ministers also stressed that UNCTAD had attained greater relevance in the present context after the conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the creation of WTO which has reinforced the need for a policy-oriented forum or institutions with a strong trade and development perspective. They therefore reaffirmed their strong commitment to strengthen UNCTAD and urged the international community to support fully the strengthening of UNCTAD.

47. The Ministers welcomed the appointment of Ambassador Rubens Ricupero, the new Secretary-General of UNCTAD, and were confident that the Secretary-General of the United Nations will provide him with full support to enable him to carry out his tasks. They further welcomed the hosting of the ninth session of UNCTAD by the government of the Republic of South Africa in Johannesburg from 26 April to 11 May 1996, and looked forward to UNCTAD IX as a means towards strengthening UNCTAD's mandate on trade and development and as a forum for generating important contributions and initiatives for development.

48. The Ministers also emphasized the renewed urgency for promoting the industrialization as a key element for the economies of the developing countries as a whole, and the essential role of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in that regard. They believed the role of UNIDO has gained increasing relevance as a result of the globalization of production and the growth of related trade, investment and technology flows, and the implications of these developments on the industrialization of developing countries. They reiterated their resolve to strengthen and support UNIDO in fulfilling its development-oriented programmes.

49. The Ministers further resolved to strengthen the regional economic commissions, which they recognized as valuable development-oriented focal points of the UN system at the regional level and in assisting countries in each region in the implementation of the recommendations of major conferences on development. They stressed the role of these commissions in assisting the General Assembly, through ECOSOC and in conjunction with other specialized agencies to undertake its action- and policy-oriented work in the economic and development field. It was therefore deemed necessary that ECOSOC enhance coordination with and among these bodies. The Ministers called on the UN system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, to support the work of the regional economic commissions.

50. In the light of the increasing role of these institutions in enhancing the development process and international development cooperation, which is the basis for peace and security, the

Ministers pledged to enhance the roles and contributions of these organizations, specialized agencies and regional commissions with regard to the development process.

51. The Ministers called for greater interaction and coordination between the Bretton Woods institutions and other bodies of the U.N. system, including its specialized agencies and organizations at the policy level. This should be considered, on a priority basis, in the context of the Agenda for Development, as called for in General Assembly resolution 47/181. In this regard, the Ministers stressed the need for a review and redefinition of the mandate and functions of the Bretton Woods institutions, including the democratization of their governance and promoting more participative and transparent internal decision-making mechanisms.

52. The Ministers reaffirmed that South-South cooperation was an integral element of international cooperation for development as well as an essential basis for collective self-reliance and economic growth and development. They therefore recognized the need for developing countries to exploit actively all opportunities for expanding South-South Cooperation and the need to examine in-depth how the Caracas Programme of Action (CPA) and the Action Programme on Economic Cooperation (APEC), could complement and reinforce each other. They also emphasized the need to revitalize the implementation of the Global System of Trade Preferences among developing countries (GSTP), especially with regard to the conclusion of the Second Round of GSTP Negotiations. They also recognized that the post-Cold war era offered new opportunities and challenges for South-South cooperation at all levels.

53. They also reaffirmed that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for but is complementary to North-South cooperation. They therefore stressed that it was in the interest of the international community, particularly of the developed country partners, to support South-South cooperation, through financial and other means. In this regard, they called upon the United Nations to consider convening an international conference on South-South cooperation not later than 1997.

54. The Ministers emphasized the increasing importance and complementarity of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries as a means of supporting the development efforts of these countries and ensuring their effective participation in the emerging global economic order that is increasingly shaped by the forces of globalisation and economic liberalization. In this regard, they welcomed the adoption of New Directions by the High-level Committee on the Review of TCDC and also the increased allocation by the Executive Board of UNDP of resources for such activities. They urged the Administrator of UNDP to continue to preserve the separate identity of the Special Unit for TCDC and to provide the necessary resources to enable the Unit to carry out its responsibilities.

55. The Ministers recognized the importance of the role and activities of the South Centre and reiterated their commitment to support the Centre. In this regard, they welcomed the entry into force of the Agreement to Establish the Center and invited all members of the Group who had not done so to consider ratifying the Agreement. They also welcomed the positive outcome

of the First Session of the Council of Representatives held in Geneva on 18 and 19 September 1995, and invited the South Centre to strengthen further its relationship and cooperation with the Group of 77.

56. The Ministers approved the report of the Committee of Experts of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) presented in accordance with the mandates of IFCC-VIII, and approved its recommendations. They expressed satisfaction with the results achieved by PGTF and agreed to explore ways and means to expand its resources. They also congratulated the South Centre, the first recipient of the G-77/UNDP award on ECDC/TCDC.

57. The Ministers welcomed the generous offer made by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to host the ninth session of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (IFCC-IX), to be held in Manila from 9 to 12 February 1996. In this regard, the Ministers urged Member States of the Group of 77 to participate actively and to be represented at a high level given the importance of this meeting.

58. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the outcome of the Sectoral Review Meeting on Energy, held in Jakarta, Indonesia from 5-7 September 1995 and welcomed the generous offer made by the Government of Guyana to host the Sectoral Review Meeting on Food and Agriculture to be held in Georgetown, from 15-19 January 1996, and urged members of the Group of 77 to participate actively at that meeting.

59. The Ministers commended the Chairmen of the Group of 77 and the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement in operationalizing the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement (JCC). They stressed that coordination and cooperation between these two groups is needed in order to advance the position of the developing countries in various multilateral issues and reaffirmed their commitment to continue such coordination through the JCC.

60. They Ministers welcomed the demarche of the co-chairmen of the JCC to the G7 meeting at Halifax in which the position of developing countries on major development issues and the G-77 Agenda for Development were conveyed. In this regard, the Ministers stressed the importance that developed countries partners, including the G-7, take fully into account the views and interests of the developing countries in their deliberations and decision-making on global economic issues.

61. The Ministers underscored that the occasion of the Eleventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries to be held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on October 18-20, 1995 will offer a new and historic opportunity to reinvigorate the joint actions and strategies of the developing countries on international issues and to provide further political impetus to the coordination and cooperation between the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77.

62. The Ministers noted the initiation of Palestinian self-government arrangements in the Gaza strip and Jericho area and called for the speedy extension of Palestinian self-government arrangements to encompass the entire occupied territories in implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. In that regard, they reaffirmed their support of the Palestinian people as they strive to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to establish an independent State on their national soil, including Jerusalem. They also reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the United Nations towards the question of Palestine. They emphasized the need for international assistance to support Palestinian development efforts in the economic and social fields. The Ministers also reaffirmed their support for the peace process initiated at the Peace Conference on the Middle East held at Madrid, which aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of land for peace.

63. The Ministers expressed concern over the serious financial situation of the United Nations due to the failure of Member States, in particular some major contributors, to meet their financial obligations in full and on time under the Charter. This has adversely affected the Organization's capability to implement fully the programmes and activities which Member States have entrusted to it, particularly those in the development field, and also to meet its financial obligations.

64. The Ministers reaffirmed the legal obligation of Member States to bear the expenses of the Organization and the requirement to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. While recognizing the need to extend sympathetic understanding to those that are temporarily unable to meet their financial obligations as a consequence of genuine economic difficulties, in all other cases, the Ministers appealed to the membership, in particular some major contributors, to exert every effort to pay all their dues unconditionally, in full and on time.